



Department of Energy – Hanford Site Emergency Preparedness Program

Emergency Management Division
Washington Military Department

Background

The Hanford Site occupies 560 square miles in southeastern Washington, located northwest of the Tri-Cities: Richland, Pasco and Kennewick. Originally chosen for the Manhattan Project in 1943, the Hanford Site was used to produce plutonium for the first nuclear weapons. Since then, the site has served as an energy technology research facility, a high level radioactive waste storage site, a nuclear weapons production facility, and more recently as the site of various private nuclear energy facilities such as U.S. Ecology, Framatone, and Energy Northwest (formally known as the Supply System). In 1989, the state of Washington and the U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office (USDOE-RL) formally agreed to enhance state and local emergency preparedness for potential accidents at the Hanford Site.

Emergency Preparedness

The Hanford Site Emergency Preparedness Program includes emergency response and preparedness planning, training, and exercises. Potential emergency incidents at the Hanford Site could involve radioactive, non-radioactive, or mixed waste materials. A dedicated phone line among USDOE-RL, the state and affected local counties assures prompt notification of an emergency. The counties of Benton, Franklin, and Grant participate in this program.

Funding

Washington's Hanford Site Emergency Preparedness Program is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. Funding provides for necessary maintenance and improvements to plans and procedures and also for training and exercise activities. Program partners include: Benton, Franklin and Grant County emergency management agencies; Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division; Washington State Department of Health, Division of Radiation Protection; and the Washington State Department of Agriculture.

State Response

The state of Washington, affected local jurisdictions, and USDOE-RL have developed plans and continue to coordinate agency activities and exercise their ability to respond to an emergency at the Hanford Site. This preparedness proved invaluable in response to the fires of 2000.

Contact

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